

Baby's Second Night - The Next 24 Hours

Congratulations! With the birth of your baby, even if this is not your first baby, you may be filled with happiness and wonder. In your first 24 hours together, you may be in awe of your new baby. During this time, both you and your baby are starting to recover from the birth and settling into a new life. For everyone, these changes can be seen more in the second 24 hours of life and can be hard, even for experienced parents. Here is some helpful information to make the second night less stressful for everyone.

A New Environment

Your baby is now living in [a brand new world](#). For months, your baby has been cradled in your warm, snug womb. It will take time to adjust to a new environment. Here are some tips for helping your baby get used to life outside the womb.

- **Safely swaddle the baby in a blanket.** Your baby is used to being in a cozy place. Some babies are soothed by being cradled or swaddled. Help your baby adjust to the space around them by loosening the swaddle over the next few days. Keep lighting low. Let your baby adjust to natural lighting.
- **Have skin-to-skin time with your baby.** Your baby is used to feeling the softness of your womb. Being placed skin to skin against mom (or a caregiver) gives a familiar warm, safe environment and lowers stress for the baby and you. This is a great way to soothe a fussy baby at any age.
- **Dress your baby like you are dressed.** You will feel if your baby's room is too warm or too cold. Consider if you are using any blankets to swaddle your baby.
- **Keep your baby in a dry and clean diaper.** When diapers are wet or dirty, they are cold. Your baby may have been used to the wet womb, but it was warm.
- **Keep loud sounds to a minimum.** Your baby is used to the muffled sounds of your world from the womb, so too much silence would be a stressful change for him.

Feeding Patterns

While in the womb, your baby was able to suckle on his hands and swallow amniotic fluid freely. The baby has gotten all of its nutrients from you through the umbilical cord. Now, they rely on you in a different way to get nutrition. Both you and baby are learning to breastfeed, so be patient.

- **Ensure a good latch.** A good latch must have proper positioning and breast hold. Get help as soon as possible if your baby is not able to latch well or stay latched for a feeding. The ADHS Breastfeeding Hotline (1-800-833-4642) is available 24 hours 7 days a week.
- **Don't limit your baby's feeding time.** Watch for feeding cues and let your baby breastfeed until it lets go of the breast. A baby should feed every 2-3 hours, but babies often want to feed more often, like every hour, especially in the second 24 hours of life. Don't worry about your milk supply. During your pregnancy, you made plenty of colostrum for your baby to drink at this time. The frequent feedings will help you make mature milk.
- **Babies feed better when they are able to touch or feel your skin.** Remove blankets and baby mittens for the feeding. Your baby's touch will not only help him focus on the feeding, but will increase your oxytocin (hormone) levels, which will help boost your milk production.



Sleeping patterns

Infants tend to sleep much of the night and day, and there is no set schedule at first. During the second 24 hours, your baby may wake more often for feedings. This is normal and is not usually a sign of a low milk supply, but rather means that your baby is adjusting to their new world. Like you, your baby has sleep patterns. These sleep patterns have been forming during the last months of pregnancy. Understanding sleep patterns can help you recognize signs of sleep readiness so you can provide the right environment for comfortable and safe sleep.



- **Stage 1:** Drowsiness - your baby is starting to fall asleep. You may see yawning, stretching, or fussing. Get the baby ready for a nap. Now is a good time to change the diaper and have quiet time.
- **Stage 2:** REM (rapid eye movement) sleep - a light sleep where the eyes move rapidly back and forth under closed eyelids. During REM sleep, your baby may twitch or jerk his arms or legs and is considered in an active sleep cycle. This is normal. Your baby's breathing may also be irregular during this sleep, but you do not need to be concerned. During REM, an infant's brain is developing and learning new skills.
- **Stage 3:** Light sleep - breathing becomes regular and sleep becomes less active. Your baby may move and startle with sounds or other stimulus. If you are moving your baby from your arms to a crib or other sleep space, they may wake for a brief moment and return to sleep.
- **Stage 4:** Deep sleep - your baby is quiet and does not move. Your baby's sleep will become a deeper sleep that may make it harder to awaken the baby.
- **Stage 5:** Very deep sleep - This stage is also called quiet sleep. Their hands and shoulders will be very relaxed. During the deep sleep cycle, you can usually move your baby a safe sleep space without waking him up.

Your baby will cycle through 2-5 stages of sleep several times during their sleep period. Sleep cycles vary from baby to baby. Babies may awaken as they pass from deep sleep to light sleep. Remember to place your baby on its back to sleep on a firm sleep surface. You can read more information about safe sleep on the [ADHS website](#). Rest when the baby is sleeping. Your baby may wake several times in the middle of the night, and you will need your energy.

The second 24 hours can be very challenging, and we are here to support you.

Call the ADHS Breastfeeding Hotline if you have questions or concerns about breastfeeding or baby's behavior.



24-Hour Breastfeeding Hotline
1-800-833-4642

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Arizona Department of Health Services 2020